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CHIPS and WHETSTONES

BY

MARCUS L. BURRIS

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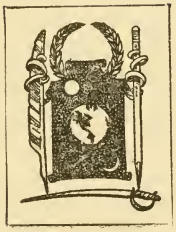

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To My Friends and Fellow Workers

This Book Is Respectfully Dedicated

By the Author

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CHIPS AND WHETSTONES.

TWENTY LINES.

What seems to me the happiest hour
  That comes in all the passing year,
Is when the first unfolding flow'r
  Uplifts its lovely head to hear
The sweet voice of the first bluebird
Speak to its love the marriage word.
With bill to bill and breast to breast
  They speak in accents low and sweet;
They twitter and their love's confessed
  In words I never can repeat.
Whether or not they understand,
They have obeyed love's best command.
Who shows the bluebird how to find
A happy mate among its kind,
Will show us, in our race of life,
How, when, and where to find a wife.
Two should not sail the sea of love
Without assurance from above
That Heaven moved them both to start
By putting love within their heart.

THE VOICE OF NATURE.

The voice of nature,
Like the music of the spheres,
Strikes not carnal ears;
To them it doth ne'er impart
The peace that fills the heart
With rapture and with joy.

Only those who love her,
Only those who seek her face
For her smiles of grace,
Hear her melodious voice,
Or can truly rejoice
In her gracious presence.

Sweet voice of nature,
Come thou oft to cheer my heart;
Charms of peace impart
While I wait to learn of thee
Blest notes of harmony
To cheer my lifeless songs.

TOO EARLY.

Lovely flowers peeping
From their little beds,
Covered up their heads
And again are sleeping.

The warm sunshine woke them
Ere the snows all fell,
Woke each from his cell,
Breathing life into him.

But Winter's cold, cold breath
Returned like a thief,
And biting each leaf
Again chilled them to death.

Sleep on little flowers,
Sleep, sleep on, I say,
Till some brighter day
Doth bring you milder hours.

Lo, then in beauty rare,
With a shining face
Wake ye from your place
And breathe a living air.

HIS APOLOGY.

You told me once to write in prose,
  Your own description to design,
But to describe the fairest rose
  In the dull, prosaic line,
Would be a task too great for me;
For a description fair of thee
First must come from the muse's lyre
In tongues of celestial fire.

Consider how the flowers look
  When Spring's entrancing morn uplifts
Their fairy faces by the brook,
  The wayside, fences, and the cliffs,
And thou shalt have a portrait fair
As chanted on the muse's lyre.
Now could I give thee this design
In the dull, prosaic line?

THE HAPPY HUNTING GROUND.

If you will peep with me upon the happy hunting ground,
Hush your spirit into silence eternal and profound;
For just the moment we enter the forest's blesséd shade,
We're in the shadow of the temple God Himself hath made.

Let us pause upon the threshold and list a little while,
The wingéd word of bee and bird and watch the golden smile
Of sunshine stealing through the windows of the temple fair,
To caress the fairy maidens with its effulgent glare.

While we peer in silent wonder from this delightful place,
We behold the brightest sunbeams like sprightly fairies chase
The darkest shadows 'cross the mountains with their golden sheen,

And paint in fairest colors the most enrapturing scene.

There the stalwart elk is nibbling the herbage good and sweet,
And the eager bear stands wondering in his safe retreat;
The hungry wolf, wearing a sneaking look upon his face,
Steals forth to pounce upon the carcass which his nostrils trace.

Now let us steal a step or two, with hearts pulsating low,
Into a flowery prairie, this forest's portico;
Turning our eyes once more upon the forest as a whole,
And then on homeward we may go with an enraptured soul.

A SNOW-STORM.

The beautiful snow is dancing down!
A moment ago the earth was brown;
Now all colors have faded from sight,
And the whole great land is pure and white.

White plasters stick to the naked trees,
And icy mantles begin to freeze
On giant elm and majestic oak,
Soon clothing each with a jeweled cloak.

I wonder if the angels of light
Are not pruning their pinions of white
When snow-flakes come down from above,—
It may be they are drops of their love.

O the beautiful, beautiful snow!
While I sit and watch you come and go,
Thy freedom I almost envy thee
And wish my spirit could be as free.

THE VOYAGE OF LIFE.

Some when starting have a notion
They can cross life's mighty ocean
And safely anchor on the main
Without a struggle or a pain.

But when a soul like this is found,
It never fails to run aground;
For there is labor, there is strife,
Connected with each human life.

'Tis well for us, as we set out,
To have a knowledge of the route;
And what I think we all should do,
Is e'er to keep an aim in view.

If we will look before we leap,
Our pledge and honor we may keep;
But if we leap before we look,
We may get caught upon the hook.

"Thou wilt show me the path of life,"
The Psalmist thought, while in the strife;
And from the time we make our start,

We should trust God with all the heart.

I firmly think we ought to give
More earnest heed to how we live;
Let it be our chief endeavor,
To prepare to live forever.

Pure religion and undefiled
Is a religion meek and mild;
The soul of man it purifies,
The life of man it beautifies.

Life is full of heav'nly beauty,
Only when in paths of duty;
And if our lives are made sublime,
Many a height remains to climb.

All things of pleasure on life's sea
To duty sacrificed should be;
This do with all thy soul and brain,
And to the highest you'll attain.

On this one thing we all agree,
That it is of necessity
For us to evermore observe
God's law, and from it never swerve.

Though charity begins at home,

She loves the whole great world to roam;
She seeketh not her own, doth find
And lend her help to all mankind.

Faith and hope do not discover
What is needed by another;
They cannot sympathize with grief,
Nor can they lend a sweet relief.

Yea, love doth triumph and prevail
Where hope and faith forever fail;
To her alone the wings are giv'n
Wherewith we all must fly to heav'n.

Finally, I've concluded this:
That they attain to greatest bliss
Who build their lives on piety
And practice deeds of charity.

DEAR YOUTH OF MY COUNTRY.

Dear youth of my country, be great!
Because thy God did not create
A noble soul like thine to be
A lowly dragging entity.
O set thy hope among the stars,
Fearing not battles nor the scars!

If thou dost hope to carve thy name
Upon the monument of fame,
With bards, with sages, and good men,
Avoid the nets and snares of sin;
And through the passing of thy youth,
Drink thou deep from the well of truth.

Seek thou the gold tried in the fire,
And not the paltry pelf of hire,
The stuff that eats the soul threadbare,
The millions of the millionaire;
But seek to lift a fallen race
To a higher and better place.

Life's noblest battles you may win
By uplifting your fellowmen;

Only the good that you may do
Will ope the gates of life to you;
Only the souls that you may save
Will deck your crown beyond the grave.

Dear youth of my country, be just!—
Worthy of honor and of trust:
Believe my doctrine when I say
True fame lies in the narrow way;
Believe me just when I confess
That doing right is true success.

Then measure not success in pelf,
Measure it by the man himself,
By what he is, not what he's made
By dint of labor or of trade;
For deceived is he, young or old,
Who thinks success is yellow gold.

O hope forever to succeed!
O hope to see thy smallest deed
In time become the greatest good,
Since there's the strongest likelihood
For one that hath such hope and trust
To be successful, great and just!

FOREST SCENE.

Here in this sunlit sylvan wild
Where God hath reared his wildest child,
Where He hath put eternal lore
To break the silence evermore,
Earth's fairest beauties float to me
Like lifeboats o'er a quiet sea.

I am sitting by a fountain
In the shadow of a mountain,
Where a stream is murmuring by,
Reflecting pictures of the sky.
This skillful artist, day by day,
Is making pictures on its way.

On my right is a bubbling spring
Where muses oft are wont to sing,
And tell their stories old and new,
While the moonbeams and falling dew
Are dancing o'er the woody hills,
To the song of the rippling rills.

Around a bush there intertwines
A massive heap of leafy vines,

Which, bending round into a ring,
Hang out above the crystal spring;
And there so snugly knit together,
Shade the spring in sultry weather.

Beneath, wild flowers bud and bloom,
And spread a sweet and rich perfume
Throughout the forest old and gray,
Making glad the wearisome day
To creatures in their stern pursuits,
The toiling insects, fowls, and brutes.

Among these flowers, bees and birds
Are sending up their wingéd words
To God, before whose watchful eye
A single creature cannot die,
Whether on land, in sea, or air,
Without His notice and His care.

On my left is a rugged steep,
And at its base a large round heap
Of huge stones, piled up, it is said,
As a home for the honored dead;
And there are found about this place,
The relics of an ancient race.

Cedars and laurels ever green
Are scattered o'er this sacred scene,

Once making for the deer and bear
Many a snug and cozy lair;
And always to this rock-ribbed steep,
They made their way to rest and sleep.

Here in this forest temple's shrine
Come birds and beasts to drink and dine;
He who prepared this feast and hall,
Invites His creatures great and small
To gather round His table wide
And eat till they are satisfied.

WINTER'S COMING.

Lo! the bees no more are humming,
Winter's coming, Winter's coming;
With staff in hand his step is heard,
He wears a long and frosty beard.

Prepare to meet this ancient guest,
Who's coming, coming, gayly drest;
Throughout the country he shall go
To coat it o'er with ice and snow.

The trees disrobed by Autumn's hand
Ice-clad will be at his command;

The forests dismantled and bare
He'll clothe again with garments rare.

The seeds dropt down by Autumn's frost
One must not think forever lost;
For to a new and happy birth
They shall return from out the earth.

In sacred peace they slumber there,
Without a sorrow or a care;
And keep within them latent power
To wake in Spring a plant or flower.

Winter's coming! the warning hear,
For he is coming, coming near;
Feelest thou not his cold, cold breath,
Blowing upon thee frosts of death?

Soon we shall rest until our King
Shall call us where perpetual spring
Will turn into eternal flow'rs
These sad and weary souls of ours.

AUTUMN.

It is Autumn! and the dismantled trees,
Like skeletons with arms outstretched and bare,
Look ghostly and forsaken. Under their
Naked forms sleep in solitude serene
Ten thousand sylvan darlings, pillowed there
In sweet repose upon their mother's breast.
Up in the blue sky are coming others
Clad in all the colors of heaven's bow,
Tinted divinely strange and beautiful
And appearing altogether lovely.

Ingathered sweethearts, whose children are ye?
From what clime have ye come with your dazzling
Accoutrements of golden drapery?
Tell me whose magic hand has touched the hem
Of your garments, leaving upon them tints
And splendors of a myriad sunsets.
Why have ye kept the best until the last,
The loveliest of your robes to die in?
Peace be unto you! and may your repose
Be full of sweet dreams and pleasant musings.

The flowers! where are they? Death, the reaper,
Hath diffused throughout the earth their odors

To embalm the frames of those he cherished
For elysiums of immortal bliss.
O Earth! thou endless source of entities,
Welcome again thy beloved offspring!
I cannot contemplate the fate of these
Darling children of thine without feeling
My own life is soon to have an autumn
That shall crumble its temple back to dust.

My soul! O my soul! take now thy warning,
For shortly thou must leave this earthly house
And in sad widowhood plod wearily
Thy rugged way into the great beyond.
Already a thousand spirit-fingers
Point steadily to thy sure destiny:
While the autumn sheds its solemn warnings
Take heed to disrobe thyself of follies,
Lest the one inevitable summons
Find not upon thee the wedding garment.

NEW YEAR GREETING.

Greet the blessed New Year!
Let all the people shout for joy;
Let nature all her songs employ
To dispel the gloom and fear
Of the old departing year.

Let Peace reign ev'rywhere!
May the high hills and rivers long
Echo Joy's enrapturing song,
Till the ocean and the sea
Join the New Year jubilee.

Ring the bells of welcome!
Turn the old year's sorrow away;
Enjoy the blessed New Year day,
Father, mother, daughter, son,
Rich, poor, and everyone.

Be glad all through the year;
Look for pleasure and not for pain;
Count not your losses but your gain;
Heaven lies about that soul
That strives for a brighter goal.

Happy New Year to all!
Blessed nineteen hundred four!
Its glad birthday will come no more;
Therefore use each moment giv'n,
Laying treasures up in Heav'n.

Remember, O remember,
That the year, like a tale that is told,
Changes from the new to the old.
Thus thy life will change ere thou
Canst consider why or how.

Keep thyself ever pure;
Watch and lay hold upon the truth,
For age will swallow up thy youth,
As night in her subtle way
Swallows up the youthful day.

SONG OF THE REDEEMER.

A Christmas Poem.

There blossomed in heaven a star,
  Most beautiful and strange to see,
Which led the Wise Men from afar
  To find the Babe of Galilee.

O'er humble Bethlehem it shone,
  Bearing a message in each ray;
And it showed the Wise Men alone
  Where Christ, the infant Savior, lay.

The shepherds who kept watch by night
  O'er their flocks on the hills near by,
Beheld the star so strangely bright
  Pouring its glory through the sky.

Then suddenly the firmament
  Was filled with the angelic host
That sang of the humble advent
  Of the child of the Holy Ghost.

"Good will to men and peace on earth,"
  Was the theme of the song they sung;

And since the holy Christ-child's birth,
  A star o'er ev'ry soul hath hung.

A star of hope has blazed on high,
  To guide the Christian on his way;
And all the great expansive sky
  Has been glorious since that day.

The holy babe waxed strong and wise,
  And made the law of God complete;
He gave the blind again their eyes,
  And raised the dead upon their feet.

All glory to this Prince of Peace,
  Who gave his life to make men free;
May ev'ry soul find sweet release
  In this great Man of Galilee.

Behold that star, O wayward son,
  Which twinkles in the distant blue;
Before thy course on earth is run,
  O may its light transfigure you!

INFLORESCENCE.

Greener grows the plant ev'ry day,
  Fairer and lovelier the flow'r,
Until the season of decay,
  Puts them at the appointed hour,
    In their little graves to adorn,
    The ensuing Spring's happy morn.

Brighter grows the soul of the child,
    Lovelier and fairer its face,
While the season of life is mild,
  Saturated with love and grace;
    But fainter grows ev'ry head,
    Approaching the home of the dead.

A season of growth and decay
  Hath ev'ry creature small and great;
Each commences to pass away
  When it has reached a certain state;
    If in youth to improve we fail,
    In old age we shall weep and wail.

Youth is the season to implant
  True purpose, principle, and thought
In the soul; for 'mong thorns you can't

Expect precious seed to come fraught,
Either with fruit or with flower,
In the zenith of manhood's hour.

Not unlike the flowers that bloom
On the morn of a bright spring day,
Is the soul, bursting from the gloom
Of direful darkness and decay.
Then free thyself from sin and strife,
Immortal soul, thou bud of life.

Take to thy trust new treasures,
Before thy God shall call thee home;
Feast on life's refining pleasures,
Before some stake or marble dome
By friends is anchored in the ground,
To mark thy temple's sacred mound.

O perennial bud of bliss!
Unless thou bloomest 'neath the sky,
A far more dismal world than this
Shall swallow up thy destiny;
But if full-blown this side the tomb,
In Heaven's garden thou shalt bloom.

CHRIST AND NICODEMUS.

N.

Master, I know that thou art from above,
For none can do such miracles of love,
Unless in him Almighty God doth dwell,
And in Him, through Him, works each miracle.

C.

Verily, verily, I say to thee,
Ye must be born again, which change must be;
And marvel not at what I have to state,
For on this birth doth hang each mortal's fate.

N.

How can a man be born when he is old?
This mystery, dear Master, please unfold.
Must he go back into his mother's womb,
And into life again be made to bloom?

C.

That which is born of flesh is flesh still;
The new birth requirement it doth not fill;
Of the Spirit, I say, ye must be born,

So marvel not, but fear my words to scorn.

Verily the wind where it listeth blows,
But whence it cometh or whither it goes
Thou knowest not, though thou canst feel and hear it,
So is he that is born of the Spirit.

N.

How can these things be? Being born again?
Is that being saved from a life of sin?
Being born of the Spirit, does this mean
That God enters the soul and makes it clean?

C.

Being a master of Israel, thou,
O Nicodemus, shouldst have known just how
A soul is made anew in God's kingdom;
Hast thou never yet possessed this wisdom?

If I have told you earthly things and you
Believed me not to be a teacher true,
How shall you believe when I have given
You all the secrets of God and heaven?

God so loved the world that He gave his Son,
To suffer and die for everyone;
And who in Him believes and doth confide,
Is born of God and may in Him abide.

COME HOME.

Once more my dear Redeemer
  Is calling me come home;
Many a time He's called me,
  But from Him still I roam.

I feel the Holy Spirit
  My sinful soul reprove;
Evermore I hear His voice,
  But still refuse to move.

Suppose I do not heed Him,
  And keep the downward way
Till this short life is ended
  And comes the Judgment Day;

What can I expect from Him,
  Who shed His blood for me,
When I'm called before His throne
  In great eternity?

Even if I meant to change
  Before my race was run,
I must take the sinner's part
  For leaving it undone.

Good intentions will not count,
  Nor shall the tears one wipes;
Knowing how and doing not
  Shall purchase many stripes.

CONSECRATION.

Dear Saviour, I would follow Thee
In true sincerity;
In all my thoughts and all my ways
My soul would give Thee praise.

To selfish motives I would die;
Lord, help me to deny
Myself, and ever follow Thee
In true humility.

Follow Thee in self-denial,
Follow Thee in trial;
In not seeking reputation,
But in consecration.

Be it my cross to sacrifice,
All that within me lies—
My life, my strength, my liberty,
All for Thee, all for Thee.

THE LOVE OF GOD.

O the boundless love of God,
How it findeth out our souls!
Though black as sin can make us,
Yet toward us still it rolls.

Like the joyous crystal stream
That courses down the mountain,
It ever runneth to us,
An everlasting fountain.

O the boundless love of God,
How dear its power to me!
It keeps running through my soul
With a current full and free.

While I tread life's rugged way,
All I hope or ask to be,
Is that God's unbounded love
May forever flow through me.

THANKSGIVING PSALM.

O give thanks unto the Lord!
'Tis a day of thanksgiving,
In which to count our blessings,
And praise Him we are living.

Go not blindly on your way,
As though led by chance or fate;
Offer up your thanks to-day—
To-morrow may be too late.

Remember your Creator,
In most grateful thanksgiving;
Make His path straight before you
By pure and upright living.

Let your heart be full of praise
For His many gracious gifts;
The soul that remembers God
Is the soul that He uplifts.

REFLECTIONS ON A SKULL.

This bleaching death's-head lying here alone,
This cavity of fast-decaying bone,
So horrid, so frightful to passers-by,
Once wore the brightest jewel 'neath the sky.

Behold it in this strange and sad divorce,
Emptied of its intellectual force;
Parted by death from the immortal soul,
Whose powers shook the earth from pole to pole.

Once priceless, now valueless as a stone
That can do naught but lie for aye alone;
Lie undiscovered, in some howling waste,
Delighting no one, exiled and disgraced.

O horrid chamber! Where is thy inmate?
Disclose to me the secrets of thy state.
Whither, whither, did thine occupant fly?
Ah, tell me what has been his destiny!

Will he return, his temple to restore?
Or has he parted from thee evermore?
Parted like a poor exile from his home,
Eternally to wander and to roam?

Alas! I look into thy hollow eyes
With amazement, wonderment, and surprise;
Those broken windows of the soul, so bare,
Give evidence that no one dwelleth there.

When I see a house whose doors are torn down,
Whose windows are shattered, the walls turned brown,
Whose chimney has fallen, the roof caved in,
I'm pierced by feelings of sadness within.

And if there's a time when I'm robbed of bliss,
It is when I behold a sight like this;
For I know that my own dear house of clay,
Will soon be ruined and crumbled away.

Then, my poor soul, where, O where shall it be?
Shall it sit and grieve over the débris
Of its cherished home, or wander away
To find another house in which to stay?

It matters not to me; I am content
Whate'er may become of this tenement;
He who raised Himself from the grave's embrace,
Will build me again in a better place.

PERSEVERE.

Out of the mire be lifted
To walk in God's highway;
Let the seeds of sin be sifted
Out of thy soul to-day.

Go, go on, climb higher,
Get full of holy fire;
Full of wisdom from above,
Full of God and full of love.

Yea, then pursue thy way,
Upward pursue it still,
Leaving signals in the vale,
And footprints up the hill.

Perchance some wayward brother,
By you guided to the goal,
May help to lead another
To the haven of the soul.

O my brother, persevere!
In each struggle God is near;
Strength will come as you progress—
Perseverance brings happiness.

THY WILL BE DONE.

Thy will be done, O Lord,
  Incline me to the right;
May Thy blessed, holy word
  E'er be my chief delight.

Thou hast planned the way for me,
  Which way I must not lose;
'Twas Thine to plan, mine to be
  Whatever I shall choose.

I would make Thy will my choice,
  And give myself to Thee;
May I evermore rejoice,
  For Thou hast made me free.

SEEKING FOR JESUS.

I'm seeking for Jesus,
  Seeking His love,
Seeking the Saviour,
  The Lord from above.

I'm seeking to know Him,
  Seeking for rest,
Seeking to live in a home
  Ever blest.

I'm seeking for Jesus,
  Seeking His grace,
Seeking a smile from His
  Glorious face.

I'm seeking for Jesus,
  Seeking His peace,
Seeking for pardon,
  And seeking release.

I'm seeking for Jesus,
  (Lord, Thou art near),
Seeking my Saviour
  And, lo, He is here.

To all who seek Jesus,
Believe this true,
As sure as is Heaven,
Jesus seeks you.

To seek and to save,
That is why He came;
Doubt not His mission,
But trust in His name.

This life's happiest hour,
You will agree,
When Jesus is yours,
And you are set free.

SWEAR NOT AT ALL.

Swear not at all;
To use God's holy name in vain
Will bring thee neither good nor gain,
Nor show thee wise
In people's eyes.

Swear not at all;
God is thy Father; to profane
His holy name must give Him pain;

His great heart aches
At such mistakes.

Swear not at all;
For in so doing thou shalt curse
Thy mission in this universe;
Divine decree
Condemneth thee.

Swear not at all;
For as sure as Jehovah reigns,
Each oath will bring a million pains;
Each wasted breath
Adds stings to death.

Swear not at all;
But let thy thoughts be pure always,
Thine ev'ry word a word of praise;
For all we say
Comes back some day.

THE GREAT DISCOVERY.

'Twas many long, long centuries ago,
(The people of God are supposed to know),
Some workmen sent out at a king's command,
Made the discov'ry in a distant land.

In the time-worn wall of a temple old,
Something they found more valuable than gold;
And with great fear and amazement did bring
Their thrice holy find in haste to the king.

When the king read it, his mantle he rent,
And fell down in dust his sins to repent;
Then lifting his head, he said with a nod,
"This is the Law of the Children of God."

So long had this Law been hidden from men
That many were lost in darkness and sin;
Even the children once full of its light
Had almost forgotten how to do right.

The race of the prophets whose faith so true
Brought down on their heads the heavenly dew,
Was all but gone from the face of the globe,

And many false ones were claiming their robe.

Hidden from all eyes, and barred from all hearts,
Was the blessèd truth which the Bible imparts;
And while in the temple was lost this book,
Most of its teachings the people forsook.

Like the rising sun on a frozen world
Was the truth of God when again unfurled;
And from the holy hills our fathers trod
Did thunder once more the statutes of God.

Glory to God for His most holy word!
Although the wicked have long interfered,
Still it keeps preaching the gospel of truth,
With more force now than it did in its youth.

Down through the ages may its echoes roll
The waves of peace to each sorrowing soul;
Bridging death's river, so cold and so wide,
And anchoring our hopes on Heaven's side.

THE WELL IS DEEP.

"The well is deep,
And thou hast naught with which to draw;
To give me drink
Thou must o'ercome stern nature's law.
Art thou greater
Than our father Jacob, who gave
To us this well?
Who long hath been within his grave?"

The Christ replied:
"If thou hadst asked a drink of me,
I should have giv'n
That living water unto thee,
Which, springing up
Within thy soul, should cleanse from sin
And mortal shame,
And make thee ne'er to thirst again."

"Then evermore
Give me this water to receive,
That it may be
As thou hast said and I believe.
Thou who hast read
The secrets written in my heart,

At thy command
Canst surely any gift impart."

Life's well is deep;
And in its mystic depths there lie
Secrets dimmer
Than distant stars within the sky,—
Secrets deeper
Than mortal man while under earthly law,
Plan how he may,
Can ever learn to solve or draw.

The well is deep;
Why try to draw the truth with naught?
Search the Scriptures;
In them the way of life is taught.
Christ the Saviour
Has opened up a fountain free,
A living stream
To cleanse all those who will to be.

Be cleansed to-day;
Wait thou no longer at the brink;
Step in, step in;
While troubled the waters are, drink
The only cure.
Another day may be too late,
Another day
May close for aye salvation's gate.

A SOLDIER'S DREAM.

All day long had the dreadful battle's roar,
Crossed the high hills and echoed on the shore;
All day long guns had thundered shell and lead,
And many were the dying and the dead.

When stars began to deck the distant blue
And beam upon the grass now wet with dew,
One poor soldier, wounded and dying, lay
Dreaming this dream in the dreariest way:

"Once a babe in a goodly mother's care,
A mother kissed these cheeks and called them fair;
Laid this decaying head against her own,
But now in silent death it lies alone.

"Alas! my mother death's cold river crossed
When word was brought her that her son was lost;
That mother's love I never can forget,
For though I'm dead, it lingers round me yet.

"O passers-by! hear thou my silent plea,
And kindly take what now remains of me,
To the spot where my mother's form doth rest,

And place again this head upon her breast.

"The narrow home will not oppress us then,
Because love will mingle with love therein;
And when we hear the trumpet's final blast
We'll feel as though a single night has passed."

TO A FRIEND.

Learn to love all things,
  And all things will love thee;
Strive to do some good
  For all humanity.

God bless thee is the prayer,
  Of this thy humble friend;
One who hopes to meet thee,
  Where friendships never end.

SONG OF A SQUIRREL.

Long ago a little squirrel
In a tiny coat of gray,
Thought to go and hunt his dinner
When it came the time of day.

Now he lived within the forest
Where the trees were great and tall;
And the hick'ry nuts and acorns,
Oh, the myriads that Fall!

So he started on his journey,
Which was not a journey great,
To a tree of hickory nuts,
Where he often went and ate.

As he bounded 'mong the branches,
Shaking limbs and breaking twigs,
He saw below a motley gang
Of poor hungry little pigs.

They were crying for their mother,
Who had left them there asleep,

And gone forth to seek provision
In the forest great and deep.

'Twas the squirrel that had woke them
From their slumbers into cries,
And soon came the frightened mother
With much terror in her eyes.

He was frightened at her coming,
And forth scampered on his way,
Keeping close among the branches
To conceal his coat of gray.

Up and on and down and over
Limbs and branches quick but still,
Went he on his eager journey
Round the bosom of the hill.

"Whet! whet!" and down came broken shells
Striking on the branches bent,
For high upon a limb he sat,
Eating to his heart's content.

"Safe! safe!" he thought, "who can harm me?
Who is he that hath the art?"
Then, alas! the hunter's bullet
Passed like lightning through his heart.

All ye who would of safety boast,
Take warning from this story,
For daggers of disease and death
May strike you in your glory.

THE RESURRECTION.

Think not thyself a house of clay,
That stands awhile, then fades away:
Fades forever and lies in guilt,
To never, never be rebuilt.

Thy outward man is but the shrine
Of that immortal soul of thine;
And God has destined it to be,
Thy temple through eternity.

Although it crumble back to dust,
There let it rest in hope and trust;
For though it waste within the tomb,
Yet high in heaven it shall bloom.

And if it pass long widowhood
In some waste field or howling wood,
Its ears of dust within the mound

Shall hear the final trumpet sound.

Lo, then in newness it shall rise,
And take its flight beyond the skies;
To be a temple bright and whole,
The home eternal of the soul.

THE SOUL.

That spark of eternal mind,
  That soul that dwells in me,
Is the same enduring kind
  As God Himself must be.

In His image am I wrought,
  This very soul of mine;
I'm the product of His thought,
  A thing to grow divine.

O Thou great Jehovah, save
  My soul, for which Christ died!
In blest newness I would live
  A creature glorified.

Help me to improve each hour,
  And make my calling sure;
To grow better day by day,
  Until my soul is pure.

A SOUTHERN BELLE.

In the South I knew a maiden,
  Who was very, very fair,
And black as the blackest raven
  Was this handsome maiden's hair.

Attractive as the sun in heaven,
  As he smiles upon this world,
Was this maid of ten and seven,
  When her hair was crimped and curled.

Her jet-black eyes sparkled bright,
  Like two big stars peeping through
The sable veil of darkest night
  Upon the silvery dew.

So winsome was this Southern maid
  That all sorrow and despair
Ran from her as the darkest shade
  Runs from puffs of sunlit air.

Never could my heart be laden
  With a load of toil and care,
When about this cheerful maiden,

For entrancing joy was there.

I met her at a coterie,
Robed in finest silk and lace;
And never, never did I see
Smiles so sweet upon one's face.

She took a hand in ev'ry game,
Doing ev'ry time her part;
And securely wrote her name
In the longings of my heart.

In all her graceful procession
She did touch my inner life;
And to make a full confession,
I did woo her for a wife.

I wooed her and I won her
At this splendid coterie;
And we made a cov'nant here
To endure eternally.

No man e'er has put asunder,
I am truly glad to say,
What God has put together,
In His mysterious way.

THE GREAT BEYOND.

Away, away, away we go!
Bound for somewhere is all we know;
Beyond away, away still goes,
And who on earth his own way knows?

Away beyond, beyond away,
Beyond is still beyond, they say;
On beyond we still discover,
Some beyond beyond another.

Above, below, and all around,
We find beyonds we cannot bound;
And what we see but makes us fond
Of thinking what is still beyond.

Away beyond, somewhere in space,
The Great Beyond must have a place,
Where all beyonds together blend
And all aways forever end.

A source, a center this must be,
The temple of eternity;
Where bends the throne that ne'er shall fall

And sits the one great God of all.

Here is that eternal ocean,
From whose bosom life and motion,
Dipped and poured from God's own urn,
Flow far away and then return.

Like drops that leave the briny deep,
On vapor-wings to make their leap
To earth, from cloud-land isles high up,
So drop we from the sacred cup.

The sea of life we mortals sail,
Will bear us back within the vale
Of that beyond from which we came
Rolling through empyreal flame.

Lo! to that Beyond have fled
The immortal souls of the dead;
Gone to visit their own first home,
The new heaven and earth to roam.

O blessed Source! O happy thought!
With blissful comfort thou art fraught;
Our spirits, too, shall take their flight,
Through thy blest portals fair and bright.

Then backward through the mist of years

Our eyes may turn, but not through tears;
For this life's course and rugged trace
We shall not grieve from that bright place.

Perhaps a thread of gold may be
Stretched far across life's stormy sea
To warn us ne'er to go again
Backward toward the realms of sin.

Unbounded sea! unbounded space!
What lies beyond this little place
Where tread we mortal creatures blind,
A richer spot in thee to find?

Tell me, ye stars and glowing sun,
Where doth dwell the Eternal One,
Who fashioned you and threw you out
To guide the living here about?

Ye brilliant worlds! ye shining globes!
Lay ye aside your golden robes;
Claim not the palace nor the shrine
Of the Eternal and Divine.

The Universe itself proclaims
That over all Jehovah reigns;
In all, through all, He moves and lives,

And to all life and being gives.

But be this true, He hath a place,
Somewhere fixed far out in space;
The Sanctum Sanctorum is this,
The Palace of Eternal Bliss.

Herein His court and mansion are,
His judgment seat, His judgment bar;
And at this bar He doth dispense
To one and all just recompense.

The king who has his great domain,
O'er all of it doth rule and reign;
Yet somewhere fixed within its bound,
His throne and palace can be found.

Just so with God, Who rules all space;
He hath His own abiding place;
Heaven's pure ethereal air
Contains His throne and palace fair.

Eternal city, O so bright!
Within thy walls is found no night;
And behind thy pearly portals
There do dwell the blest immortals.

Holy of Holies, full of love!

Metropolis of the above!
Jesus shall ope thy pearly gates
To paupers as to potentates.

But all that enter must be true,
Washed and cleansed with heavenly dew;
Truly must they be born again,
Purged from every trace of sin.

Unseen, eternal Great Beyond,
To think of thee I am still fond;
Because the mansion house is there,
Which through my Saviour I shall heir.

Ev'ry step I take toward thee,
And ev'ry wave on this life's sea,
But brings me closer to the goal
Of my immortal, God-like soul.

Yea, soon the haven shall appear
Beyond the dark, the sad, the drear;
And I shall reach that happy spot,
Where evil things shall be forgot.

O blessed thought! O happy hours!
O world of never-fading flow'rs!
So deep with diamonds, deep with gold,
Thy full fruition is untold.

PARADISE.

Fair as never-fading flowers,
Was Mother Earth in her first hours;
Untouched by death or dire decay
Was she on that illustr'ous day,
When God pronounced her good, with all
His new-made creatures great and small.

She, like a holy queen of bliss,
Had nothing lost or gone amiss;
When man first kissed her rosy cheek,
She had no rock-ribbed mountains bleak;
For all the rocks were 'neath her mold,
And served as coffers for her gold.

God made her fair and very fair,
And her sweet breath, the sunlit air,
Did not rage in furious storm
To mar her rare and lovely form;
Nor did the sun pour down his rays
So hot upon her, in those days.

No scars by old Apollo cut,
No cabin dark, nor smoky hut
Was then upon her noble breast;

For man and beast lay down to rest
Side by side in the forest wild,
Calmed to repose by breezes mild.

Sweet-voiced birds among the bowers
And sweet bees within the flowers
Sang all the little babes to sleep
And o'er them vigils e'er did keep,
While good old father took repose
And our dear mother plucked the rose.

The great deep forest was their home
And beneath its majestic dome
Were stored provisions rich and rare,
On mountains, hills, and ev'rywhere;
And when was gone the food in store,
God always gave them plenty more.

Lo, all was perfect, all was free,
Excepting just one little tree;
The Lord reserved this as His own,
Bade His children to let it alone;
For, though its fruit they did enjoy,
It surely would their lives destroy.

A stranger came, his face was fair,
To the children he did declare
That God had told to them a lie,

When He announced that they should die;
That he was jealous lest the tree
Make them to be as wise as He.

The foolish children were deceived,
And their Father was greatly grieved
To shut them out of Paradise
For taking the stranger's advice;
But by this single act of shame
Strangers also themselves became.

Lone pilgrims in a foreign land,
Bound, they knew not where, a ruined band;
God loved them still, but for their sin
He could not bring them back again,
Till His belovéd Son Himself agreed
To suffer for their wicked deed.

FARE THEE WELL.

Fare thee well!—the words that sever
Fondest hopes and ties forever.
They rend the heart and craze the brain,
They fill us with undying pain.
Fare thee well! who ever said it
When he did not feel and dread it?

ODE TO YOUTH.

O glorious springtime of life!
Blessed morning of existence!
Be slow in passing;
Bless me all the while
With thrills of freshness,
And let the bloom of sweet peace
Unfold within my breast forevermore.

Ere Age shall write upon my brow
The wrinkles of ponderous care,
And entwine my head
With locks all hoary,
May life's vital spark
Glow with immortal purity,
And seeds of glory in my soul be growing.

Author of perpetual youth,
Remember me, remember me;
Pour upon my soul
Rain of peace and love
And joy and sunshine,
That I may learn to be like Him
Whom Thou didst send to be our pattern.

May I grow younger day by day,

Younger, stronger, purer, better,
Born of the Spirit
To youth immortal,
Offering, giving
These fleeting years as hostages
To the Author of Life Eternal.

O gracious Father, bless our race
With this same life and lasting youth!
The blessings I have
Asked upon myself
Bounteously pour
Upon my fallen fellow men,
For whom Thine only Son was given.

TROUBLE IN SCHOOL TO-DAY.

We had trouble in school to-day,
Jack and John, they went out to play;
And John, he, so Matilda said,
Threw an' hit Jack upon the head.

Then the teacher, he called the two—
He didn't know what else to do;
For Jack, he was a-cryin' bad,
And John, he was a-lookin' mad.

I could see from the teacher's eye
That he would make the feathers fly
From off John's good-for-nothin' back,
For his throwin' an' hittin' Jack.

The kids, they all wanted to see
Just what the case would turn to be;
So they came in, hoppin' about,
But the teacher, he put 'em out.

I stayed out, fur I'd hered 'im say
That us kids must all keep away
When he had correctin' on hand;

But the rest, they didn't understand.

My! my! sich licks and sich yellin'
As we all hered—there's no tellin'
How many times John's triflin' back
Was pelted for his hittin' Jack.

Goody! goody! because it's joy
For me to see him lick a boy
Like John, who allus loves a fight
And never learns the rule of right.

Good old teacher! he's not all talk,
He's just the man to make 'em walk
The chalk or any line you please,—
He'll almost whip 'em when they sneeze.

Them Wrights an' Pinkertons have fought,
At ev'ry school that has been taught;
And I am glad Professor Thrash
Will rid our school of all such trash.

When one teacher just lets 'em go,
The next 'un has a rugged row;
If his eye's not keen, and arm strong,
He'll not hold out to teach 'em long.

With three things 'Fessor Thrash doth deal,

And to 'em often doth appeal;
When soul and honor he has tried,
He 'peals like lightning to their hide.

THE POET TO HIS WIFE.

Dear partner of my life,
  My lover strong and true always,
My darling patient wife,
  I shall sing to you to-day.
Your sunny face and eyes
  Call in my wandering mind
From distant orbs and skies.

I need not soar away
  From earth to fancied worlds above,
Where angels sing and play
  To imbibe their songs of love;
For I have found in you
  That which poets long have sought,—
An inspiration true.

Content to dwell with me
  In the sunshine and the shadows,
Always looking happy
  As flow'rs within the meadows;
Ever ready to serve,

Ever ready to cheer me,
And never known to swerve.

Trusting in you ever,
Because your trust is fixed in me,
May we never, never,
Turn from true sincerity.
Then blest our lives will be
And glorious our reward
In great eternity.

Into my life you grew,
As sunshine into a flower;
The way I never knew,
But think the same kind Power
Whose wonder-working art
Gave the flower its sunshine
Did put you in my heart.

ANGEL OF DEATH.

Take off your shoes, for where you tread
Doth sleep in silence, cold and dead,
Some victim of that awful hand
Which reaps the life of ev'ry land.

His sickle is his unseen breath,
His black name the Angel of Death,
Who maketh life his only prey,
And dines ten thousand times a day.

He steals our lives and takes his flight
Before our eyes in broad daylight;
Or when the day is passed and fled,
He comes to snatch us from our bed.

Angel of Death! wingéd terror!
Wages paid to man for error!
While thou art reaping, reap thou well,
But reap and bind no soul for hell.

Reap on, thou awful scourge of God!
Reap on, and place beneath the sod!
No one that liveth hath a shield

To keep thy sickle from the field.

Reap each mortal, reap each flower,
Reap and reap with all thy power;
Keep thou thy banner black unfurled,
Till thou hast reaped this whole great world.

Heaven has sent thee forth to reap
The golden grain of life, and keep
Thou forever thy sacred trust,
Because thy reaping, sir, is just.

Hear my warning, O dread Angel!
Hear my warning and heed it well;
Some day Life, who is on thy track,
Will make thee give her dear ones back.

Though oft a blessing in disguise,
Thou shalt come to thine own demise;
Trembling through the bottomless pit,
Thy thrice black soul shall ever flit.

COMING THROUGH THE LEA.

A coming through the lea
I met my dear Laure,
A singing like a bird,
The sweetest ever heard,
A coming through the lea.

A coming through the lea
She had some flow'rs for me;
Some roses fully blown,
She said they were my own,
A coming through the lea.

"O Laure! sweet Laure!
An angel thou must be!"
I cried in my delight,
And she was close in sight,
A coming through the lea.

A coming through the lea
It happened so to be,
While treading there in bliss,
That we exchanged a kiss,
On meeting in the lea.

A coming through the lea,

Why did I kiss Laure?
Because she was my love,
An angel from above,
A coming through the lea.

A coming through the lea,
Why did Laure kiss me?
Because I was her love,
And like a gentle dove
She kissed me in the lea.

A coming through the lea,
Why were myself and she?
There among the flowers,
We met to spend some hours
Of pleasure in the lea.

A coming through the lea
She promised me to be
My own beloved wife,
To love me through this life
And in eternity.

A coming through the lea
I promised her to be
Her husband firm and true,
The right to always do

And ever love Laure.

As coming through the lea
E'er may our promise be;
May ever, ever love,
Sent dow nfrom God above,
Abide with her and me.

Then coming through a lea
Eternal shall we be;
Where flowers fair and sweet,
For aye beneath our feet,
Shall bloom for her and me.

DEATH OF EXPECTATION.

Alas! my expectation dies;
  She sits no longer in the air,
For through her patient heart there flies
  The direful dagger of despair.

On hope I dosed her hour by hour,
  On faith I fed her long and well,
Yea, on love's own magic power
  I kept her till she said farewell.

MOTHER.

Mother, the best friend to me
That Providence ever gave,
Is beyond the ocean's wave,
And I'm left upon the sea.

It was hard to say goodby
When our Captain took her soul
To that bright eternal goal
Where immortal pleasures lie.

But since I know all is well,
I can better bear my grief,
And I have a sure belief
That 'twill be our last farewell.

While I sail upon the sea,
I shall ever watch and wait
For the open pearly gate,
Where she waits to welcome me.

Thanks to thee, O mother dear,
For thy life and patient care
For thy faith and for thy pray'r,

For thy love that knew no fear.

I shall strive to be upright,
  As thyself didst live and teach;
  All the good that's in my reach
I shall seek with all my might.

Now goodby just this once more;
  Our parting is not so sad,
  When I stop to think how glad
Our meeting on that bright shore.

LUCIFER.

O Serpent of Despair!
Thy breath is in the air,
Thy shame is on our face,
Thy sting is in our race.

You love to tempt mankind,
To turn us deaf and blind;
This world is not your home,
But here you like to roam.

Under Eden's bowers
You lay for many hours,
Plucking pretty bouquets
To win our Mother's praise.

Like a roaring lion,
To entrap all Zion,
To drag her to your den,
You, sir, have ever been.

But, sir, the Prince of Peace
Thy captives can release,
And He has fixed thy doom

When they have passed the tomb.

Forever He shall rain
Upon thee death and pain;
Forever He shall roll
Hot fire upon thy soul.

GUSSIE.

Dear Gussie, sweet spirit, gone home to bliss,
Thy cheerful presence we do greatly miss;
But though thou art gone to thy home above,
Still there is with us thy sweet life and love.

Thou'rt dropt like the bloom from the fairest flow'r,
Sunk like the sun for the bright morning hour;
Dropt to bloom in heaven and sunk to rise
In that eternal world beyond the skies.

IN MEMORY OF A CLASSMATE.

"To live in hearts we leave behind
  Is not to die", no, not forever;
To leave an old home for a new
  The fondest ties doth often sever.

Our dear classmate, thou hast left us,
  All thy bonds on earth are sundered;
In thy new home beyond the skies,
  Thou art with the angels numbered.

Thy friends and loved ones wonder why
  God called thee away so early;
But the reason to me is plain,—
  'Twas because He loved thee dearly.

To another world fair flowers
  To bloom again are moved from this;
And when our Father moves a soul,
  He greatly needeth it in bliss.

How we shall miss thy cheerful face,
  Thy words of comfort and of peace;
Thy willing hands, thy loving heart,

But these thy blessings shall not cease.

In our dear old alma mater,
As we shall meet from year to year,
Thy absence we shall ever mourn,
And always drop for thee a tear.

We turn our eyes toward Heaven
To speak our last and sad farewell,
For something tells our longing hearts
That thou dost with the angels dwell.

'Tis sweet to think of thee up there
And it doth almost dry our tears,
To know that thy most blesséd home,
Shall be our own in future years.

HEAR, O HEAR, THE SAVIOUR CALLING.

Hear, O hear, the Saviour calling
You away from sins appalling;
Calling you with a loving voice,—
Why not to-day make Him your choice?

You need not fear you'll go astray,
For He's the truth, the life, the way;
High up in heaven you have heired,
The mansion house He has prepared.

There is an action on your part,
So give to Him just now your heart;
And He will put within your breast
A hope of that eternal rest.

In His great book He'll write your name
And note the hour when you became
An heir of His, a soldier brave,
When your transgressions He forgave.

Wake, thou that sleepest, and arise!
Cease now thy sleep and ope thine eyes;
Find thou in Him that sweet release,

For quickly He His call shall cease.

O take this journey, wayward son,
And see what Christ for thee has done!
Eye hath not seen, nor hath ear heard,
What they shall have who keep His word.

Lo, He'll be with thee evermore,
And when the race of life is o'er,
He'll take thee into mansions fair
And thou shalt dwell forever there.

PEBBLES FROM THE DEEP.

I.

Reason doth say a Great First Cause
Created all and made the laws
That guide and govern and control
Each tiny whit, alas! the whole
Great universe, embracing what
There is beheld and beheld not;
But does she teach a man to know
There is a God, while here below?
Can she herself alone explain,
Or can she help him to obtain
Any certain information
Of that God or his creation?

Now there are some who would suggest
That God exists all things attest.
Aye, such suggestion may be so,
But how doth the suggester know?
A proposition we suggest
Is insufficient for a test,
Unless it can be well explained
And then by Reason well maintained.
Reason takes the things she knows,

And gath'ring others as she goes,
Pursues the object of her flight
And pours around it heav'nly light.
But one saith Reason goeth blind,
That she doth often lose her mind;
But if this applies to her 'tis when
She reasons on the side of Sin;
For then she leaves things known in view
For things unknown and things untrue;
Hence she herself needs Heaven's light,
To lead and guide her steps aright.

The creature knows he doth exist,
The creature knows he doth subsist;
He knows, he feels, he wills, he moves,
And thus his own existence proves.
Then his existence doth suggest
To his own being *Deus est.*
He knows the creature ne'er creates
A creature, hence substantiates
The being of a Creator,
Who is God, the Originator,
Not only of man, but all things,—
Yea, the myriads of beings,
Creatures, worlds, both known and unknown—
He made them all, they are His own.

But mystery impedes the flight

Of Reason when the sacred light
Of the Creator fails to roll
The truth of heaven through her soul.
She faints and falls before the foe
Whithersoever she doth go,
Save when true Wisdom doth inspire
Her heart with love and holy fire.
When she is filled with Wisdom's grace,
Her own origin she doth trace
Right back to that Eternal One
Through whom her wondrous works are done.

Thus if Reason reasoneth right,
'Tis when she reasons in the light
Of God, who put her in each man
That all might know Him and His plan.
But Evil hath disqualified
The reason of man to preside
Over the soul's eternal worth
While he abides in mother earth;
Hence a written law, the Bible,
God made the rule infallible,
To which man's ev'ry act and thought
Into subjection must be brought.

Did Reason like the Bible tell
Of things in Heaven, things in Hell,
Did she disclose to you and me

What was, what is, and is to be,
Then would the Bible be in vain,
For man without it could attain
To things as deep as it doth tell,
Be they in heaven, earth, or hell;
But since she fails to reason out
The things engulfed in gloom and doubt,
She needs the Bible to direct
Her course of mind and intellect.

II.

Some look for Nature to impart
To them a kind of magic art,
Which shall enable them to find
E'en what is mystic to the mind;
But to the wise the fact is known
That Nature, when she works alone,
Revealeth naught and nothing worth
To mortal man while here on earth.
'Tis true she hath a book of lore,
Which has been famous evermore;
But wisdom, nor science, nor art,
Can she herself alone impart.
If she doth teach, then tell me why
She hath pupils to live and die
In heathenism abject and low,
Ah, tell me, for I wish to know.

Truly, all would be scholars wise,
Were Nature able to advise,
Whereas right with her we have been,
E'en from the hour of origin:
And if she teach, it seems to me
Our being in her company
Should be expressive of the truth
That she hath taught is from our youth.
Alas! they surely are deceived
Who think themselves to have received
One whit of wisdom from a source
So destitute of teaching force.
Man learns from Nature's precious book,
Where'er he turns his eyes to look;
But though he learns, she doth not teach,—
This one thought we readily reach;—
Then man doth show himself to be
A greater force and strength than she.
Man, with true Reason on his side,
Nature's great book can open wide,
And the Bible, God's law, in brief,
Helps him peruse each gloomy leaf,
Aids his reason to reach and find,
The deep, dark secrets to his mind.

III.

Others their lives to Love consign,
Accounting her a thing divine,

A synonym of their dear Lord,
The source of comfort and reward.
Love is great, but hear my warning,
That love fails to be adorning
When Reason doth not energize
Her action and her enterprise.
Then thy love and reason better
By fast binding them together,
Since when sundered and apart,
They mislead their possessor's heart.

Of a truth Love comes from Heaven,
And to mortals she is given;
Her worth no man can estimate
While dwelling in this lowly state.
In fact these three: Faith, Hope, and Love,
When sent to mortals from above,
Were meant by Heaven's Potentate
The souls of all to actuate:
And, lo, methinks His mighty hand
Put Reason in the three's command,
Whereas without her they forget
From whence they came and where they met.
But though she doth command the three,
She never gains a victory,
Nor wins a battle or a fight
With her own native strength and might;
But let her army be complete

And all her foes she doth defeat.

Heaven will surely find him out,
Who hopes and loves and does not doubt;
Who reasons through the Bible's lore,
What lies in Nature's boundless store;
Who always seeks a brighter goal,
Who knows the Maker of the soul;
Who trusts in Him and doth confide
To live and learn beyond the tide.

THE CHRISTIAN'S DREAM.

One night while all was still and dry,
I stole me out beneath the sky,
And laid me down beneath a tree,
To spend an hour in revery;
And while the starbeam's trembling ray
About my cheeks began to play,
Anon there broke upon my ear
Some notes of music sweet and clear.
I listened, but I could not tell
From whose blest lips those strains did swell;
But knew no music ere did roll,
With so much beauty to my soul,
From mouth of man or throat of bird,
As those sweet strains that there I heard.

There came to me that blesséd night
Two holy angels clad in white;
Softly touching my mortal frame
And then addressing me by name,
Said, in gentle accents, "Arise,
And go with us beyond the skies,
For great Jehovah calleth thee
The happy home of saints to see."
Just here methought, "What meaneth this?

Is this the gate to endless bliss?
And is this death? Then let me die
Ten thousand thousand times," thought I.
The angels knew my thoughts and said,
"This is death, and now thou art dead;
But remember that over them
That have been redeemed by Him
Who died on Calv'ry's rugged brow,
Death hath no rule or power now."

That blesséd night's entrancing charm
Was but the touch of Jesus' arm;
The starbeam's ray that kissed my face,
The light of dying love and grace;
The heav'nly strains that filled the air,
The vigils of God's tender care.
Then bearing me home to glory,
Repeating salvation's story,
Went those holy angels of light,
Clad in their shining robes of white.
My lips, too, caught afire with praise
And I my voice with them did raise,
As we joined that numberless throng,
Still swelling salvation's sweet song.

Methought I yielded up the ghost,
And went to heaven with this host;
Methought I left beneath the tree

My outward man in revery;
Methought the beams of heaven's light,
Did fashion me all fair and bright.
I looked no longer like an elf,
For Jesus made me like himself
With fire like incandescent flame,
And wrote upon me his new name.
This transformation gave to me
A view of all eternity—
That spirit world with diamonds strewn,
With flowers sweet and fully blown.

I looked and, lo, a city fair
Seemed to be resting in the air;
Music melodious and clear
Began to fall upon my ear,
While lost in wonder and surprise
At this city of destinies.
I looked again and now, behold,
The city seemed to be pure gold;
And one bright vista, one alone,
Led on my optics to a throne,
Which rose in beauty high above,
On which did sit the God of love.
Between me and the city lay
A placid sea, or crystal bay,
From whose fair and beauteous face
Evaporates the dews of grace.

Here, too, is life's great golden tree,
Just at the edge of this clear sea,
Beneath whose branches steals along
Life's crystal river with a song.
Songs of redeeming love and grace,
Rose sweetly from this holy place;
Music the sweetest and the best
That brought to me eternal rest.

I looked once more and, lo, there hung
Those worlds of which the poets sung—
Suns, stars, planets, systems untold,
Each mantled with a robe of gold.
I feel enraptured; gone is fear;
I see the Prince of Peace appear,
Who is far the fairest flower
In all the heavenly bower;
A lily fair, whose fragrant breath
Saves from despair and awful death
Our captive souls, all sick and sore,
And gives them life forevermore.

Behold the awful change! We fly
As swift as sunbeams through the sky.
And now there bursts upon my sight,
A region of eternal night.
"And what is this?" I enquire.
No sooner said than lakes of fire

Below me burn and smokes arise
That ne'er escape the hellish skies.
Deep shrieks of anguish and despair
Saturate the infernal air;
Eternal fires forever rain
Throughout the whole thrice black domain,
And in their everlasting flame,
Lost souls are foaming out their shame,
Like the waves of the angry sea,
Which surge and break 'gainst rock and tree.
Like infants weeping and distressed,
Like wandering stars that have no rest.

A moment longer and we go,
On through this realm of endless woe,
And see suspended at our back,
A sable sphere as midnight black.
I tremble at the sight and shake,
And then beneath my oak-tree wake.

O blesséd thought that I abide,
In Jesus Christ the crucified,
Who soon will bear me safely o'er,
To dwell with Him forevermore.

BILLY BEDOUIN.

Could Chance a man originate
And Fate that man perpetuate,
I might believe myself to be
Of just such parentage as he.

Whosoever did cast my lot,
Let it be Fortune, Fate, or what,
But sought the dark, the drear, the wild,
To leave me there an orphan child.

A castaway, a wretch am I,
Left all alone to live and die
In the wildest spot that e'er man
Did see or God Himself did plan;
Where fierce wild beasts both night and day,
Thrice mad with hunger search for prey,
And fill the great deep forest home
With screams of anger as they roam;
Where all is wild as wild can be,
Surrounded by a wild, wild sea,
Whose briny waters ever teem
With howling things and things that scream.

For one to be an orphan child,
Left all alone in such a wild,

Is more terrible felt than heard;
And it would take some other word
Than that of mortals to relate
The horrors felt in such a state.

Why such should ever be my lot
I will confess that I know not,
But be my portion bad or well
Right here it seems that I must dwell.
Sometimes I almost think myself
To be what some would call an elf,
But when I see myself aright
My fairy thought doth take its flight.

I know that down by one old tree,
Whose branches almost reach the sea,
Two grassy mounds alone appear,
Where rest the forms of parents dear.
And those who came across the sea
To help them found a colony,
Also died, leaving me to fight
The plague of death with infant might.
I have no reason I can give
Why I remained to thrive and live,
Unless an unseen hand of love,
Let down from blissful climes above,
Kept off the awful pestilence
And served for me a safe defense.

It may be I am left to keep
And watch the graves of those who sleep;
For they were saints who freedom sought,
Freedom to teach and to be taught.

My life and ev'rything around
Is full of secrets, deep, profound,
And I am left to reason out
What I would know through gloom and doubt.
The great above and deep below
I try to fathom and to know;
But each is an unbounded sea
Of deepest, darkest mystery.

Lo, there is life within my frame,
But can I tell from whence it came?
Did earth give it? or did it fly
From some fair world beyond the sky?
No creature could my soul create,
Nor did I come by chance or fate:
Methinks from an Eternal Source
I surely get my living force.

But am I left without a guide,
Fenced in by this great ocean wide?
Left with an instinct of my own
To solve my problems all alone?
Nay, for in me is a power,
Hid as life within the flower,

To know my course and guide my way
As on I plod from day to day.

Though torn from those I loved the best,
I shall not be for aye distressed;
For He who took my parents dear,
Doth bid me hold no doubt or fear;
And while I do not comprehend,
I have no doubts as to the end.
The parting words of loved ones gave
Me hope of life beyond the grave;
And I know from a voice within
That I shall surely live again.
Then why should I lament my lot
And think this isle so dark a spot?

When I lie down to sleep death's sleep,
There will be not a friend to weep;
Not a foe to rejoice, I pray,
While I silently pass away.

No dirge o'er me shall there be sung,
No funereal marches rung;
No doleful filling of the tomb,
For I shall fall midst flowers that bloom;
Flowers of joys that never fade,
Of hope and love and dying aid,
To lie uncovered here in peace
Till comes my hour of sweet release.

PAY YOUR VOWS UNTO THE MOST HIGH.

Pay your vows unto the Most High;
You promised Him your life and love,
If He would only save your soul
And send you blessings from above.

Your soul He saved, the blessings came,
And they are coming, coming yet;
Pay your vows unto the Most High,
You may forget, you may forget.

You said goodby to selfish aims,
To all the ways of sin goodby;
Brother, remember, remember,
Pay your vows unto the Most High.

Pay your vows unto the Most High,
Do not forget, do not forget;
Your vows are in the book of God,
Why not pay them yet, pay them yet?

Just one more day may shut the door,
Just one more night may turn the key;
And leave our unpaid vows to seal
A black and awful destiny.

WHAT IS SUCCESS?

Success, the business man would say,
Is making business go your way;
Piling up gold and precious wares
Like the mightiest millionaires.

Doctors believe success to be
Power to heal each malady,
To get therefor a handsome sum
And make more patients want to come.

The lawyer succeeds when he sees
Growing fame and increasing fees,
The arguments against his case
Giving his own opinions place.

The preacher thinks he's succeeding
When the people hear his pleading,
Join his church, promptly pay the dues,
And ev'ry service fill the pews.

The teacher thinks he's gaining ground
When his sal'ry goes up a round,
When his pupils obey and learn

And help the fires of progress burn.

The poet thinks his verses shine
When they are quoted line by line,
When critics laud him to the skies
And make his fame forever rise.

The farmer, with much fruit of toil,
And wide sections of fertile soil,
Thinks he has struck the lucky nail
And holds success fast by the tail.

What do you think success to be?
With the others do you agree?
If my opinion you would know,
You may gather it just below.

Being and doing all you can
To help yourself and fellow man,
Living a life that God will bless
Is what I call a true success.

BROKEN CLOUDS.

A beautiful day was born
Not a cloud was on that morn;
But before the sun went down
The face of heav'n wore a frown.

A beautiful child was born
To brighten a home forlorn,
But it scarcely got its breath
Till there came a call from death.

A blesséd hope was born
On a bright and happy morn,
But before the night came on
It had vanished and was gone.

Thus the race of life is run,
Clouds to-day, to-morrow sun;
Sun to-day, clouds to-morrow,
For ev'ry joy a sorrow.

PUFF, PUFF, PUFF.

Puff, puff, puff,
On thy cigarettes, O fool!
And I would that my tongue could tell
How useless to thee is school.

Puff, puff, puff,
Through the golden days of youth;
Ever learning but never coming
To a knowledge of the truth.

Oh, well for the abstaining boy!
Let him evermore abstain;
Oh, well for the penitent boy,
Who will never puff again.

Still some foolish puffers go on
Blighting and ruining the brain,
Despite of what is said unto them,
For what is said is in vain.

Puff, puff, puff,
And drive your coffin nails;
The lost vigor of thy youth
Will return to thee with wails.

THE CUD-CHEWERS.

Once I knew a silly girl,
Whose head had many a curl;
And she and her giddy chum,
Were forever chewing gum.

Two boys as silly as they
Came to see the girls one day;
But what for I never knew,
Unless 'twas to learn to chew.

The four went out for a walk,
But couldn't take time to talk;
For each boy and silly maid,
Chewed like cattle in the shade.

'Tis said the four went to school
And called the teacher a fool,
Just because he passed a law
To keep the gum from their jaw.

The old hard-hearted teacher
Was as strict as a preacher;
And there was nothing surer,

He would not have a chewer.

"Do not chew your lives away,
Like a cow that's eating hay,"
Said he to the girls and boys
While they chewed in perfect joys.

The boys ceased their chewing soon,
Hoping to resume at noon;
But the girls, with hand-propped chins,
Glanced about with silly grins.

The instructor, by and by,
With keen lightning in his eye,
Gave to them such plain advice
That they felt as small as mice.

"Girls," said he, " 'twill never do
To forever keep a chew
Stuck between your precious lips
Where your swain love's nectar sips."

The maids then dropped their brows,
Like two lazy, sleepy cows;
And with slowly acting paws,
Pulled the cuds from out their jaws.

THE VISION.

When I was a child of tender years,
With curious thoughts and divers fears,
There came a vision of heav'nly love
Down into my soul from God above.

Although as a child I understood
I prayed my Father to make me good,
And in answer to my simple pray'r
I became accepted then and there.

When I am tempted to go astray,
I turn me back to that happy day
When I was given the heav'nly light,
And receive new courage for the fight.

Vision of my youth, my comfort be
All the way across the stormy sea;
Wherever tossed by wind or wave,
Remind me of God's power to save.

My dear friends, whose hair is turning gray,
Go back often to thy youthful day
When the heavenly vision was near,

And do not forget to hold it dear.

Go back when the stars in heaven's blue
Spoke messages of God's love to you,
Preached you sermons of the spirit's goal,
And shed sweet communion on your soul.

That heavenly vision e'er obey
And cherish until your dying day,
For thy dear Father, who sent it down,
Will surely bestow the promised crown.

FLYIN' INSTRUMENTS.

Ever' time I go to run my trot—
  And I don't need to give 'em hints—
I'm willin' to be knifed or shot
  If ten thousand flyin' instruments
    Don't buzz around my light
    And pester me out o' sight.

'Skeeters, gnats, and all such allied—
  I call 'em flyin' instruments—
Anything that can puncture your hide
  Till it hangs in a thousand rents.
    Bugologists have another name,
    But in the long-run it's all the same.

It makes no difference what,
  They bleed you their level best;
When your stagin' ties in a knot
  You can't have a moment's rest;
    But one don't notice where he's at
    In case he's hung a bouncin' cat.

Flyin' instruments after all
  Are not so mortifyin' bad;
When a man can make a haul

To keep him a-feelin' glad,
All the instruments in the air
Cannot run him away from there.

Fishin' is like most other things,
It hath both its joys and sorrows;
But whoso pulls the proper strings
Very little trouble borrows;
And learns not to mind the rents
Made by flyin' instruments.

A POSSUM HUNT.

If I want my cup to brim with joy,
I take me back when I was a boy,
When we used to possum hunt at nights,
And my heart ran over with delights.

When persimmons were at their best,
And the leaves were down to rest,
With pineknot torch as rich as tar,
We threaded our way near and far.

Old Jack, our ever faithful dog,
Would swim a creek or walk a log,
And follow a trail so far in the dark,
That we could scarcely hear him bark.

He was a dog that never lied,
And never barked till satisfied
The game he sought was up the tree,
Where he stayed in expectancy.

Or if perchance 'twas in a hole,
There he scratched till we got a pole;
And breathlessly he hung about,

Till we twisted the creature out.

As a last resort, tobacco smoke
Was forced within the den to choke
The varmint till he came our way,
Or suffocate him where he lay.

No tree in the woods too high grew,
Nor was one ever so big through
Our axes could not lay it low
Before the morning's golden glow.

But if the night was almost done,
We would lay by to use a gun;
Sometimes asleep, sometimes boasting,
Sometimes at potato roasting.

Often a possum or a coon,
Sighted between us and the moon,
Was shot to the ground in the night
Without our waiting for daylight.

'Twas somewhat savage, I confess,
To put those creatures in distress;
But we hatch out a solution
Charging it to evolution.

A FISHIN' TALE.

"They're a bitin," said old Joe,
"An' I'll just slip down a bit
An' drop in my line just so,
Where I'm accustomed to sit.

"I have a place on the grass,
Under the old sycamore tree,
Where I always get a bass—
They are usually waitin' for me.

"My pole is a common pole,
Generally a pawpaw sprout;
An' the hole is a little hole,
But all the same I yank 'em out.

"A five cent piece buys my line,
An' a copper gets my hook;
But my luck is superfine—
I catch 'em in ev'ry nook.

"I use a fruit jar for a trap,
I specially rig for bait;
An' I often take a nap,

Should it be my luck to wait.

"Do not have to tarry long
For all the minnows I desire;
They come rushin' in a throng
Like so many gnats to a fire.

"Now if I should chance to wait
A little long for a bite,
I simply spit on my bait
An' see 'em go at it right.

"It may sound foolish to you,
But I declare it will work;
One application will do
If you but know when to jerk.

"It tides me over a spell
To fish for a day or two;
It makes me sound an' well
An' my blood an' muscles new.

"One doesn't have to catch great whales
On a simple pleasure search,
Nor the kind that break the scales—
There's satisfaction in a perch.

"How I do pity a soul,
Who never did feel the thrill

Telegraphed along a pole
  When one's a-bitin' to kill."

Just ask old Joe why he's old,
  Why he's so strong and hale,
And his answer he'll unfold
  In a simple fishing tale.

He'll tell you, before it's too late,
  And you've begun to shiver,
To get a fishing-pole and bait
  And hike out for the river.

LOOK UP.

Look up;
The stars are all above,
So is heaven, so is love.

Look up;
Joys stud the golden sky
For every upturned eye.

Look up;
For Heaven must needs frown
On eyes which are cast down.

Look up;
Not because you despise
That which beneath you lies.

Look up;
Because your Maker's face
Sheds on you smiles of grace.

Look up;
Keep the eyes of your soul
Fixed firmly on the goal.

TAKE A DAY OFF.

Take a day off;
And play your very best,
For you surely need to rest.

Take a day off;
You will find yourself stronger
And live a good while longer.

Take a day off;
Try your utmost to see
How cheerful you can be.

Take a day off;
For it invariably earns
One many happy returns.

Take a day off;
If you will do it often,
You may delay your coffin.

DO NOT WAIT.

Do not wait with the thousands at the gate,
But enter with the few,
Who would be noble, good and true,
Rather than linger with the throng
That prefer to drift along,
Hoping to gain the blest abode
By being merely found upon the road.

Do not wait with loiterers at the gate,
Because the gate may close
And leave thee doomed with those
Who will never, never gain
Entrance to the blest domain;
Nor dare thou stand in thy brother's way
Lest he also may go astray.

Do not wait with grumblers at the gate;
Accept the sun or rain,
Whether loss or whether gain,
For a brighter and better fate
Awaits thee beyond the gate,—
Awaits the faithful and the true,
And guides the uncomplaining through.

Do not wait with atheists at the gate,

Who say there's no other side,
Though the gate is open wide
And the stars are shining bright
Through the day and through the night,
In the glorious, blissful skies,
Bright enough to dim thine eyes.

Do not wait with any at the gate,
Whether sinner or whether saint,
To utter a complaint;
But thyself at once withdraw,
In obedience to the Law,
And never permit thy soul
To stop short of its intended goal.

MY PLATFORM.

Though others do, I'll not complain;
What's the use? It never lifts
The load or the burden shifts,
Nor does it ever count for gain.

I'll not complain, it's a poor plan
To go around with a growl
And a perpetual howl
For the mere reason that I can.

I'll not complain, for it's not right;
Believe me, I'll have the nerve
Never to blench or to swerve
So long as I am in the fight.

I'll not complain; it's not good sense
For one to turn up his nose
Every time an ill wind blows,
Nor will it bring a recompense.

I'll not complain; here I will stand,
Because I know that I can
Be an all round, four-square man,
And Heaven will lend me a hand.

GET OFF THE FENCE.

Get off the fence;
On one side or the other
You will find in need
Some worthy brother.

Get off the fence;
It is the wrong place for you
To hunt for the work
That you best can do.

Get off the fence;
It is on the solid ground,
Or lower down still,
Where jewels are found.

Get off the fence;
Because there's nothing on top
For him who refuses
To turn loose and drop.

Get off the fence;
But do not sit idly down
And expect for yourself

A bright golden crown.

Get off the fence;
But maintain a steady pace
For the prize in store
At the end of the race.

TELL THE TRUTH.

Tell the truth,
For it pays in a thousand ways.

Tell the truth,
Stand your grounds till the trumpet sounds.

Tell the truth,
And have the nerve never to swerve.

Tell the truth
If it kills; thy duty it fulfills.

Tell the truth
Whether in pains, in losses or in gains.

Tell the truth,
Part from it not and don't say you forgot.

Tell the truth
Every breath, and stick to it till death.

Tell the truth,
Do not doubt, for Heav'n will find you out.

CHEERFULNESS.

Be of good cheer;
For you can possess the fine art
Of commanding joy for your heart.

Be of good cheer;
The toil will be at least half done
When your fight for courage is won.

Be of good cheer;
Let down the anchor of the soul
And keep both eyes fixed on the goal.

Be of good cheer;
For whether you succeed or fail
Downheartedness will not prevail.

Be of good cheer;
For you may be only blest
With painful trials for a test.

Be of good cheer;
Because God is not far away

From those who will cheerful stay.

Be of good cheer;
The graces all for you will search,
And vict'ry on your banner perch.

PESSIMISM.

What's the use to do
Your best, or the other?
No one will thank you—
Not even your brother.

What's the use to strive
To possess a good, clean name?
For sure as you're alive
You'll be slandered all the same.

What's the use to give
Your neighbor a square deal?
For certain as you live
'Twill only make him squeal.

What's the use to share
Another's weal or woe?

You just as well not care
A rap and let him go.

What's the use to pray
And store away regrets,
When church members don't pay
Their vows and honest debts?

What's the use to be
A Christian—if one could?—
There's naught in it for me,
Since it can do no good.

What's the use to wait
And be sorely tried
In this impossible state
Where Christ was crucified?

What's the use to try
To go to Heav'n to dwell,
When all under the sky
Are going straight to hell?

What's the use? I say
If I'd lives by the score,
I should not wish to stay
On this accurséd shore.

OPTIMISM.

I never did my best
But that a glorious rest
Was my reward from the Lord.

I never helped a brother
But that I longed to help another;
In doing so my heart did glow.

I never prayed a prayer
When my Maker was not there
My heart to bless with happiness.

I never helped a soul in need
And went unrewarded for the deed;
More was returned than I had earned.

I never saw the worst Christian so low
As the best sinner I know;
I do not fear to make this clear.

I never limit the power of grace
To a person or a place,

For it can win the worst of men.

I never the hereafter dread,
For my soul is amply fed
On food unseen and hope serene.

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